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Carmina Minima.

BY

Charles Cowden Clarke.



—“Motés in the Sonné beame.”—CHAUCER.

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO., STATIONERS' HALL COURT

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Given to our Darling Portia, —
 from us both (one in Heaven, the other on Earth),
 with all good wishes, Heavenly and earthly, —
 on her Birthday 27th Dec. 1881
 by her loving Auntie
 Mary Cowden-Clarke

Villa Novello — Genoa.

L'Erina cara, bella
 tua Lioria





CARMINA MINIMA.

BY

CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.



——“*Motés in the Sonné beaine.*”

CHAUCER.

1859.

-P GEN 1973

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Preface.

THIS knot of "unconsidered Trifles" (which certainly Autolycus himself would not care to "snap up") was intended only for private circulation,—as a keepsake and memorial of old and sweet friendships; of cordial acquaintances; and of abounding hospitalities.

The old saying however recurred to me;—"There be many that do know the Lord Mayor's Jester; but whom the Lord Mayor's Jester doth *not* know:" and so, I, in my late public capacity of lecturer, may possess numerous unrecognized friends among my audiences, who might desire to retain some small memento of one, who claimed, at all events, the merit of an honest zeal and assiduity in administering to their intellectual demands and recreation:—I therefore determined upon the usual, open form of publication.

The compositions themselves are casual thoughts, scattered, at long intervals, over more than a half century of varied, busy, and every-day mental employment. They accurately fulfil the present intention of their author concerning them; since, being "Trifles," they betoken his "Respect" in this, their presentation.

Nice, Nov. 1858.



Carmina Minima.

Prologue

To a School Play.

IN times of yore, when our first Edward reign'd ;
(Edward, whose brows by patriot blood were stain'd)
In times of yore, when learning in our isle
Dar'd not assume her present winning smile ;
When dark-ey'd superstition's icy hand
Benumb'd th' aspiring genius of the land ;
The British Drama first began her course :
Weak in its onset, feeble as the source
Of great Maragnon, whose gigantic wave
Rolls on (by thousand rills enhanc'd) to lave
Each fertile region, gladdening as he rolls.
Even so, our Drama, breaking from the thralls

Of purblind ignorance, first wound her way.
Her stream was small, and weak *her* first essay ;
 And our first actor was the Parish Clerk !
 A man not quite the fittest form'd to work
 Upon the feelings, or to rouse the mind
 To deeds of fame—unless perchance you find
 That Edward's Clerks were far more erudite
 Than those whom we are doom'd to hear recite
 Sublimest truths in quaint and vulgar tone.
 The taste improv'd as men had wiser grown,
 And plays were play'd by dramatists alone.

Then mighty Shakespeare burst to life and light !
 The genius of our Drama hail'd the fight ;
 And darted forth, exulting, on the wings of fame,
 To publish to the world her victory, and claim
 The wreaths that long had been the bright rewards
 Bestow'd on Grecian, and on Roman bards.

Our author, who to-night implores your smile
 On this, his first attempt,—though puerile,—
 Begs me to warn you from the ill-tim'd laugh :
 For you must be inform'd that more than half
 Is Shakespeare's language blended with his own ;
 And with such art, that they can scarce be known
 Afunder. You, therefore, that are *well* read
 In Shakespeare, must be cautious ere you spread

The sneer farcaftic, ſince you may be found
Committing ſacrilege on bardic ground.

Our author and his friends in nought have ſpar'd
expenſe ;
And you yourſelves can teſtify their diligence ;
Then give them your applauſe—their ſweeteſt recom-
penſe.

1806.

Sunſet.

An irregular effuſion.

O H how exquisite is this ſtillneſs !
The vulgar ſhout, and more obtrufive laugh
Are now confin'd within thoſe magic walls
Licenc'd by the State. Never did I ſee
So grand a ſunſet ! The whole expanſe
Is liquid gold ; and not a cloud has dar'd
To intercept the flood of glory.
“Dark with th'exceſſive bright, the ‘trees’ appear,”
Waving their locks majeſtic to the orb
Of day. Now all the tiny habitants
Of air are wheeling round and round my head,
Shouting their veſpers to the parting day.
Their little congregated voices ſound
Like gladſome boys at play—heard from afar.

Around me every object beams with joy.
 The wide-extended fields of golden corn,—
 Untorn by storms of wind, and lashing hail,—
 Gently bow their heads to the soft step
 Of balmy zephyrs dancing o'er their surface.
 All—all are glad !—I too am glad as they :
 Glad to be born free as my native air :
 Free was I born ; and free will I remain.
 Glad in my friends : and glad to own a heart
 Boundless as the deep ; warm as yonder glow ;
 Leaping to cheer the persecuted soul ;
 And grateful for the blessings shower'd around.

1805.

The Nightingale.

WHAT time the sun has wheel'd into the deep
 His fiery car, and evening cold and pale,
 In ruffet clad, and zone begemm'd
 With dewy pearls, in sober state
 “ Comes walking o'er the brow of yon high eastern hill,”
 The Nightingale begins his tale of love :
 Small in the onset, and abrupt :
 Now in a loud and silver tone
 Of extacy :—Now in a simple strain
 So love-lorn, and indeed so full of ruth,

As though his little heart would burst :
 Like to those sudden dying falls,
 Struck from that airy harp by light-wing'd fays
 Flitting o'er the strings. Sweetest warbler ! say ---
 What sorrows can afflict thy breast.
 Thou hast no shining friend to spoil
 Thee of thy mate : no oily villain thou,
 To lure thy little partner from her home.
 Senseless of these woes—happy bird !
 Happy bird !—thou'rt in Paradise !

1807.

Horace.

Book I., Ode XI.

“ Tu ne quæris (scire nefas).”

I ADVISE, my dear Tom, that you never demand
 What limits the Gods have prescrib'd to our days ;
 Nor consult Mr. Andrews*—that notable hand
 At nativity-casting : believe me, 'tis base.
 'Twere better to bear with an equable mind
 Our lots, good or bad, as they're sent from above ;
 Not caring if this be the last winter's wind
 That blows over our heads ; or whether great Jove

* Successor to Moore, the Almanack-maker and Astrologer.

Has many bright days for us laid up in store.

Be wise, then, and quaff your Madeira ;—leave sorrow :
For e'en while we talk, Time has fled on before ;

Then seize fast his forelock, and trust not to-morrow.

1809.

To my Sister,

On her birth-day.

BLESS thee, my Bell ! again with sincere joy
I hail thy birth. The day, like angel's face
Is beautifully clear and calm ;—no trace
Of weeping cloud. The rich-hair'd, lusty boy
Of morn (like him of old, who made a toy
Of arms and steelèd foes) with awful grace
Shakes out his golden locks, and strides apace
Through Heav'n, making all nature reel with joy.

To meet th' occasion of this noble day,
Each field is deckèd with a coronet
Of dainty flowers. With slender, dewy ray
The primrose meekly smiles, and dear violet
That stole its scent from Heav'n.—For thee they bloom :
For thee they smile : for thee fling round this sweet
perfume.

1816.

Song.

AS night-rain to the parched tree ;
 Or to the stag the fountain-wine ;
 As honey-dew to the eager bee,
 Such was thy mouth to mine.

Like peaches on a single stem,
 Unbosom'd to the golden sun,
 Oh, I would kifs,—and kifs like them ;
 And, like them, ripen into one.

TO * * * *

DO not think my heart is gay,
 When I am join'd to scenes of gladness ;
 For still the thought of thee,—away,
Will rise, and smite my heart with sadness.

For I do love, and prize thee so,
 That I could hate myself for taking
 Part in mirth, the while I know
 For love of one that heart is aching.

Yet art thou here, where'er I go,
 With all thy nobleness to cheer me ;
 And all thy love,—which none can know,—
 In blessed thoughts are ever near me.

And thus, though fever'd by a living death,
 Thy finer spirit walks out to my need ;
 Like the meek violet's delicious breath,
 Though crush'd itself beneath an ugly weed.
 1817.

Song.

I LOVE the talking of the giddy breeze ;
 And the quick ripple of the ocean ;
 And the waving of high forest trees ;
 And the clouds' eternal motion.
 But more than these I love a calm so deep,
 That I but *think* the breeze is nigh ;
 When woods and clouds are still as flocks asleep ;
 And ocean like the marble sky.
 So have I lov'd the low, sweet voice and clear
 Of that unreproug mouth ;
 Whose notes still hang upon my mem'ry's ear,
 Like fairy tales in early youth.
 But when my eyes those eyes would meet,
 And each a mute entreater,
 Oh, then my heart indeed would beat ;—
 For though the words of love are sweet,
 The thoughts of love are sweeter.

1817.

To Vincent Novello.

GAY says,—no doubt you recollect it,—
 “Friendship, like Love, is but a name,
 “Unless to *one* you stint the flame.”

But who the Devil would expect it,—
 Since friends are few, and fewer found
 Sweet to the core ; and firm, and found ;
 That having one friend, I am bound
 To flight the offer of a second, and reject it ?

Besides, you know,—or ought to know it,—
 That I'm a pluralist,—at least
 In friends ; and (which is more) am blest
 In my selection, and can show it.
 Shall I then sue for a divorce ;
 And cut off each collateral source—
 Of joy ;—all merely to give force
 To Mr. Gay's assertion ?—I'll not do it !

No ! but whene'er I meet a fellow,
 Whose heart seems of the good old breed ;
 Plain and uncourtly ; and yet freed
 From four severity ; and mellow

With deeds of love and gentlenefs, I'll bear him
 My worfhip ; and with pride declare him
 " Friend ! " and " in my heart I'll wear him,—
 " My heart of hearts, as I do thee, ' Novello.' "

1818.

Song

On Old May Morning.

Set to Mufic by Vincent Novello.

COME, hie away, away with me ;
 Away, my love, to the greenwood tree.
 The fun has left his ocean bed ;
 The happy lark is on the wing ;
 Let no one talk of drowfihed,
 For this is " Old May Morning ! "
 Then hie away, etc.

We'll fit beneath the flowering bough,
 And hear the thrufh his bridal fing ;
 And I will deck thy gentle brow
 With gems of Old May Morning.
 Then hie away, etc.

Pale primrofe, and blue violet ;
 Cowflip, with head down turning ;
 Shall form thy fylvan coronet,
 My Queen of Old May Morning.
 Then hie away, etc.

And thus the hours shall glide along
 On dove-like, blessed wing ;
 And we will sing our woodland song
 To welcome Old May Morning.
 Then hie away, etc.

And when the day is well-nigh told,
 And we are home returning ;
 We'll talk of those in times of old,
 Who danc'd on Old May Morning.
 Then hie away, etc.

The Four Seasons.

An imitation and continuation of the oldest known English song,—the second stanza forming a portion of the original.

SPRINGÈ is ycomen in ;
 Dappled Larke finge :
 Snowè melteth ;
 Runnelle pelteth ;
 Smelleth winde of nu buddinge.
 “ Summer is ycomen in,
 “ Loude finge Cucku !
 “ Groweth feede,
 “ Bloweth meade,
 “ And springeth the woode nu.”

Autumne is ycomen in,
 Ceres filleth horne :
 Reaper fwinketh,
 Farmer drinketh ;
 Creaketh waine with nu corne.

Winter is ycomen in,
 With stormiè fadde cheere :
 In the paddocke,
 Whistle ruddock,
 Brighte sparke in the dedde yeere.

1829.

Lines

In my Mary's Diary.

MAY cheerful thoughts that wait on health ;
 May self-respect,—the bank of wealth
 That feareth not detraction's stealth,
 Be thine, my Mary !

May this day's record be the spring
 Of all the year's delight, and bring
 No mildew with its blossoming,
 My wife! my Mary !

And when the summer-days are gone
Of life, may our dear union
Shine like a frosty setting sun,

My own dear Mary !

Jan. 1, 1831.

The Sea-Bird.

Set to Music by Thomas Attwood.

UP and down o'er the toiling sea ;
Up and down with the driving gale ;
'Mid blinding snow, and flashing hail,
The Sea-bird flaps on patiently.
No storm can quell his steadfast heart ;
No ill can change—no fortune part
Him from his cheerful constancy.
But to all sorrow
He bids good morrow ;
And when the storm urges,
He bounds o'er the surges,
And clings to his home in the rock by the sea.
Mary, my own, like that sea-bird am I ;
Thou art my home,—thou my rock by the sea.
When adverse fortune's tide is running high,
And all around our heav'n looks frowningly,

I'll bid good morrow
 To every sorrow ;
 And when the storm urges,
 I'll bound o'er the furies,
 And fly to thy heart,—my rock by the sea.

1832.

The First of the Fairies.

WHAT ho ! ye minims of earth !
 Enwomb'd in your cells,
 The buttercup bells ;
 Come forth at my call ;
 Come forth, one and all :
 'Tis Oberon calls you to birth.
 Whence we came, and what we were,
 Let no one ask, let no one care,
 Since here we are,—since here we are !
 You Brisk, and Frisk,
 With Whip and Nip ;
 Come forth in your ranks,
 Come forth with your pranks,
 And crown we our birth-night with mirth !
 Come one, come two,
 “ With mop and mowe,”

Come twenty in order meet ;
 And as you pass
 O'er the dewy grass,
 In lightning glance
 Of your whirling dance,
 Make rainbows with your twinkling feet.
 You, Mustard-seed, go tweak
 With roguish freak
 The nose of cramming priest ;
 While Cobweb, there, and Nip,
 Will pinch and grip
 The snoring flattern in her nest.
 And when the owl has wing'd his flight ;
 And the pearly drops of night
 Hang thickest on the lime-tree flower ;
 You, Bean and Pea-blossom, go clamber
 To the sleeping maiden's chamber,
 And prank anew her window bower.

Now, hey for a roundel,—fo, fo !
 And now through the roundel we go ;
 My fairies keep time
 To the cricket's chime,
 And the laugh of our chorus, " Ho, ho ! "

The Fairy's Funeral.

BENEATH the frowning tressles of a hoary oak,
 Whose shadow in the moonlight dappled o'er
 The velvet-tissued lawn, I saw a company
 Of Elves, clad all in sparkling white, as leaves
 Of spear-grass in the wintry morning rime. In hand
 Each bore a daify-blossom, tipp'd with flame,
 Drawn from the beacon Glow-worm. And so, hand in
 hand
 Together join'd ; with heads, like snow-drops, bow'd,
 And footing flow, they circled a dead sister's form,
 Singing this fairy dirge :

Weep, Fairies, weep ! our reign is o'er ;
 For Death, alas ! has come among us ;
 Roundel dance we now no more,
 For his venom'd barb hath stung us.
 Fairies no more—we sad-ey'd mortals are,
 Wedded to sorrow, and made grave with care.

(*Chorus.*) “Fairies no more,” etc.

* * * * *

Cetera in nubibus.

The Laft of the Fairies.

GONE are all the merry band ! Gone
 Is my Lord—my Oberon !
 Gone is Titania ! Moonlight fong
 And roundel now no more
 Shall patter on the graffy floor.
 And Robin too ! the wild-bee of our throng,
 Has wound his laft recheat—
 Oh fate unmeet !
 The roofed cock, with anfw'ring crow,
 No longer starts to his “ Ho ! ho ! ho ! ”
 For low he lies in death,
 With violet, and musk-rofe breath
 Woven into his winding-sheet.
 And now I wander through the night,
 An old, and folitary fprite !
 No laughing fifter meets me ;
 No friendly chirping greets me ;—
 But the glow-worm fhuns me,
 And the moufe out-runs me ;
 And every hare-bell
 Rings my knell :—
 For I am old,
 And my heart is cold.
 Oh mifery !
 Alone to die !

To a beautiful little Dell, with a Fountain ;
near Maidenhead, Berkshire.

A Rhapsody.

O H, Fairy cirque ! within thy mystic round
Are found

Daintier delights than Angels taste.

Not all the sweets that graced

The hallow'd Tempe's vale,

Its lapsing stream, and wanton gale

Fainting on beds of Asphodel ;

Or swelling hills, with golden fruitage crown'd ;

Could ever lure me from thy sacred haunts ;

Where pants

My throbbing heart with extacy ;

As o'er that level lea,

I climb yon gentle mount,—

Moss-grown,—that o'er-hangs the fount

Of all my joy :—Oh, let me count

Minutes for hours ; the while my spirit flaunts

In giddy rapture o'er the tender scene.

Between

Those smoothly parting banks that shade

The auburn-bower'd glade,

Sunny and warm, I lie

Clofe-bedded, like the bee, and pry

O'er all my odorous luxury.

Such are the gifts that make us closely lean

On life ; and such thy charms, my Fairy dell,

To quell

All sorrow ;—and yet, such the spell

In thy mysterious well ;

That I could ne'er refrain

To enter there ; although my gain

Be certain death :—but then, the pain

How sweet ! *how* sweet, no tongue can ever tell—

Oh Fairy Dell !

1832.

Whip-poor-Will.

THE moonlight sleepeth on the sea ;

The night-wind slumb'reth on the hill ;

The cattle in the misty lea

Are all reposing tranquilly.

All are at peace—all take their fill

Of rest,—save the lorn heart of Whip-poor-Will.

On him the honey-dew of sleep
 Its gentle balm doth ne'er distil ;
 But he is doom'd to mourn and weep
 From night to night the sorrows deep
 Of those, whose groans and anguish fill
 The Mammon-tyrant's purse.—Poor Whip-poor-Will !

And he in morning-life was parted
 From all he lov'd, to go and till
 The stranger's foil :—and while he smarted
 With grief and rage, died broken-hearted.
 And now he sings by moonlight rill,
 " Sleep, sleep, worn ghost of Whip-poor-Will ! "

1832.

" ' Whip-poor-Will,' and ' Willy-come-go,' are the shades of those
 " poor African and Indian slaves, who died worn out and broken-
 " hearted. They wail and cry, ' Whip-poor-Will,' ' Willy-come-go,'
 " all night long : and often, when the moon shines, you see them fitting
 " on the green turf near the houses of those whose ancestors tore them
 " from the bosom of their helpless families ; which all probably
 " perished through grief and want, after their support was gone."

Waterton's Wanderings.

Woman's Smile.

Set to Music by Charles Des Anges.

THROUGH every weary stage in life,—
 Through every care—through every strife,
 Kind Heaven relief may fend ;
 But nought can beguile
 The heart of its toil,
 Like the smile of a Woman-friend.

'Tis night-rain to the parched tree ;
 'Tis honey-dew to th' eager bee ;
 'Tis zephyr to the opening rose :
 'Tis Heaven's own light
 To him whose night
 Has sadden'd amid the Polar snows.

'Tis white cliffs of their native land,
 At morning seen by sailor band
 Who long have toil'd upon the main ;
 Or bubbling spring
 To him wand'ring
 O'er Zara's wild and scorching plain.

'Tis freedom to the dungeon-bound ;
 'Tis coolness to the throbbing wound ;
 Or health to plague-tainted air.
 'Tis morning breaking ;
 An infant waking ;—
 'Tis every thing that's good and fair.

1833.

To my own Mary.

I FEEL my spirit humbled when you call
 My love of home a virtue :—'tis the part
 Yourself have play'd has fix'd me : for the heart
 Will anchor where its treasure is ; and small
 As is the love I bear you,—'tis my all,—
 The widow's mite compar'd with your desert.
 You, and our quiet room then, are the mart
 Of all my thoughts ;—'tis there they rise and fall.
 The parent bird, that in its wanderings
 O'er hill and dale, through copse and leafy spray ;
 Sees naught to lure his constant heart away
 From her who gravely sits with furled wings,
 Watching their mutual charge.—Howe'er he roam,
 His eye still fixes on his mossy home.

1832.

To Lady Harriet * * * * :

With a White Moss-Rose,

On her birth-day.

(Written at the desire of a friend.)

BE pleased, dear Lady Harriet, to receive
My simple gift upon your natal day.

Simple indeed, in worldly estimate ;
And yet (if judg'd aright) attended by
A train of high and gracious thoughts serene.

It teaches us, that all created things,
However fair, expand in loveliness,
When cherished by the cultivator's art ;—
That mental beauty, like the wood-side briar,
If wisely foster'd, blooms the perfect flower.

Its dazzling whiteness also teaches us,
In sacred emblem, of virgin purity,
And of that lustrous company divine,
Who stand before the Throne, and sing of peace
And love vouchsaf'd to man for evermore.

And when, at last, its ripen'd splendour fades,
The finer spirit still lives on, and tells
In accents audible, that Virtue alone
Can triumph over Death :—that beauty dies ;
But th' odour of Truth survives decay.

In after years, dear Lady, may you shine
 A spotless rose in Albion's noble wreath :—
 Virtuous in deeds, brilliant in ornament
 Of Body and Mind :—and when the hand of time
 Shall bear thee hence, to bloom in Paradise,
 May th' odour of thy name be sweet in death,
 As wither'd blossoms of the White Moss-Rose.

To Lady Harriet * * * * :

With a copy of "TALES FROM CHAUCER."

GRISELDA'S meekness; and that gentle strength
 Of heart, which whisper'd hope to mild
 Custance, with but her infant child
 To gaze on, 'mid the booming sea-wave's length :
 The steadfastness of faith which sweetly rung
 Through th' infant voice, that in the street
 Of Jewry, and in Mary's honor did repeat
 "O alma Redemptoris!" loudly sung :—
 All these be thine, fair lady ; but with nought
 Of their attendant cares :—Saluzzo's trial ;
 Alla's absence ; or stealthy Jew's espial,
 That Christian innocence so fiercely fought ;
 Aspirings meek, faithful and strong, meet no denial ;
 But gain thee, Heaven, at last,—the victory well bought.

M. C. C.

On visiting a little Dell near Margate,

Called "Nash."

OH what a power hath Gentleness!—I who
 Unmov'd could look upon the furling sea,
 And with affected valour bear my front
 To the loud winds when they call:—or at
 The base of some cloud-piercing hill, whose
 Sullen head uprear'd in loneliness,
 Seems to forbid th' access of struggling foot;
 Should feel my spirit by opposition rous'd,
 And nathless *would* stand on his peaked top.—
 Yet when I come into this little world
 Of leaves and lowly flowers, where silence reigns
 (Like the fam'd Halcyon seas, without a ripple)
 In everlasting rest; my spirit subdued,
 Acknowledges that "Gentleness is Power."

It is so calm and beautiful a place,
 You would suppose it could have never known
 The fearful rush of "wind and dire hail;" or

That violence of any kind, untam'd
 Could harbour there :—The blessed influence
 Of some sweet angel hovers o'er the spot
 To keep it from all harm,—and it is safe.
 So, th' ark of God rested in peace beneath
 The spreading wings of mighty Cherubim.

There may you see trees of the loveliest growth ;
 Some fresh and green, as if they “ never would
 Grow old.” The graceful Elm is there with shaft
 Corinthian, and leafy Capital.
 Fantastic Hawthorn, with its snaky trunk
 Writhing from out the ground. The Doric Oak.
 Ash with smooth rind, and amber-colour'd leaves,
 Shedding a golden light. You might suppose
 The bright-hair'd huntress, Dian, had been there,
 And all her glory not yet pass'd away.

And, all around this green retreat, the banks
 Rise higher than your head, topp'd by the trees :
 And down their sides the lazy Bramble trails
 Its flendernefs ; and here and there, through clumps
 Of green, you catch the auburn-colour'd mould—
 Rich and warm : and sometimes spots of chalk,
 On which the sprawling Ivy loves to show
 Its dark and glossy leaf.—But when the blithe

And shining May, garlanded with flowers,
 Is mistress of the year ; then you must come
 And see her scatter from her ample lap
 The yellow Cowslip, and the pale Primrose ;
 The scented Violet that lurks unseen,
 And like a noble heart, presents her store
 With earnest diffidence. Then you will see
 The perking Daisy ; and, like burnish'd gold,
 The yellow Crowfoot—Buttercups—Blue-bells,—
 But why need I go on ?—Suffice to say
 You scarce can plant your foot, and not bow down
 Some pretty flower.

Surrounded thus with leaves,
 I, and the lovely partner of my walk,
 Stood in mute wonderment at all we saw :—
 While the unfearful stillness all about,
 That yielded only to that “ small still voice ”
 Among the leaves, which “ whisper'd Peace.”—
 Above our heads, the calm and bright blue sky ;
 Beneath our feet, the fresh and pleasant green ;
 And everywhere the placid-smiling face
 Of Nature in her joy, sent to our hearts
 The unresisting truth, that “ Gentleness
 Is Power.”

But *I* should not have told your charms,
 Your perfect charms, delightful spot!—that task
 I would have left in other hands ; myself
 Contented to have ponder'd o'er each scene
 In silent homage. Little justice have
 I render'd you, dear Nook !—and yet, be sure
 I put forth all my might, since I obey'd—
 What could I less ?—the mild command
 Of woman's sweet request, and sweeter looks :—
 And thus again I prove that “Gentleness is Power.”

1818.

The Burial of a Soldier.

SAD was the day, and mournful clouds festoon'd
 Th' horizon. O'er thy placid brow,
 Beautiful Hampstead, many a dusky wreath
 Came gathering ; and that face which wont
 To beam out as the morning bride, now, like
 A lovely widow through her weeds,
 Look'd anxiously serene. The noisy wind
 From the South-west, steep'd in tears,
 Came sobbing in my face ; and on its wings
 Bearing the low and furly hum

Of the great town. In melancholy plight
 The pale sun had sunk down to rest ;
 And slow-pac'd, lazy cows went dreaming home,
 Murmuring on their way a deep
 Organic note, responsive to the call
 The hind repeats, to " Come along."

How are we victims made of circumstance !
 Yon frowning sky, and fobbing wind,
 Yon feebly-gleaming sun, whose rays seem'd blanch'd
 With tears ; together with the low
 Mysterious coil from busy multitude ;—
 All so conspir'd to fill my mind
 With images of melancholy cast,
 That e'en sweet Nature's face methought
 No longer lovely seem'd,—but *all* was gloom.
 So, on the brow of that fair hill
 Which fronts thy southern face, sweet town, I stood,
 And thought of all the mighty tide
 Of Being then before me, urging on
 Its founding waters towards that dark
 And silent sea, that intellectual plumb
 Hath never founded. And I thought,
 That, not a thousand generations hence,
 When haply, all that vast abode,—

Those myriad piles of monumental art,
 The domes, the spires, the palaces,
 The grinding wheels of those long-throated engines,
 That effortlessly pour out their smoke,
 And all the works of grandeur, show, and use,—
 Shall, like a summer-morning vapour,
 Pass away, and know their place no more.

The dizzying roar of all thy streets,
 Gigantic town ! which far off in the champain
 Like “ the voice of many waters ” sounds,
 Shall cease ;—and in the place of this, a stillness
 As of that dead, and pall-black night
 Egyptian, when the defolating spirit
 Set forward on his stern behest.

A stillness—as if noise were yet unborn :

A stillness—that the carrion crow,
 When flying over, shall be heard a mile.

Displac'd by mouldering quays and bridges,
 Yon lapsing stream shall leave its ancient bed,
 And lose itself in one wide swamp.
 There shall the daunted wild-duck live unscar'd,
 And build amid the juicy flags
 That nod and jerk to every passing wind.
 The lonely desert-wanderer

Shall come from th' utmost foil of that new world,
 Where Patagonia wedges down
 Into the great South sea :—a land now rude
 In arts, and wild,—then cultivated :—
 And as he stands upon the verge of that
 Great swamp, amaz'd to see the end
 Of human pride, by th' humbling hand of time,
 Like molten lead his voice shall fall,
 Echoless, as he pronounces—"LONDON !"

Nor marvel, reader, at my words,—
 Since Babylon the Great hath fall'n, and Tyre
 Become a naked rock : and Carthage
 Is destroy'd ; and hundred-gated Thebes
 An awful, giant wreck.—Rome too,
 Some time mistress of the world, now sits
 Upon her crumbled throne—forlorn—
 In faded grandeur, and magnificent
 Decay.—Where is the Eastern might
 Of Tamerlane,—self-styl'd Kouli Kahn ?
 Or of the lion-tartar, Zenghis,
 Who glar'd in Ispahan ; and like a wild
 Tornado rav'd, and shook the patient
 Earth ?—Shall these all fade and sink with years,
 And thou alone in verdant youth

Live on ? Shall Nature change her course for thee
 Alone ? Shall mutability
 Obsequious avert her rolling wheel
 And pass *thee* by ?

Such were my thoughts,
 When straight I heard a far-off trumpet speak :—
 And searching down the vale to find
 The quarter whence th' obedient wind had borne
 The warlike note, I mark'd a band
 Of foldiers bearing to his silent home
 A dead companion. * * * *

(To be finished—"To-morrow,—and to-morrow,—and to-morrow !")

1816.

Hymn to God.

IN thy large temple—the blue depth of space ;
 And on the altar of thy quiet fields
 (Fit shrine to hold the beauty of thy love),
 Great Spirit ! with earnest cheerfulness I place
 This offering, which a grateful heart now yields.
 For all those high and gracious thoughts that rove

O'er all thy works ;—for all the rare delights
 Of eye and ear ;—harmonious forms and strains
 Of deepest breath ;—for each ensuing Spring,
 With all its tender leaves, and blossoming,
 And dainty smells that steam from dropping rains ;—
 For sunny days, and silent shining nights ;—
 For youth, and mirth, and health,—though dash'd with
 smarts
 (As luscious creams are ting'd with bitterness) ;—
 For Hope,—sweet Hope !—unconscious of alloy ;—
 For peaceful thoughts, kind faces, loving hearts,
 That suck out all the poison from distress :—
 For all these gifts I offer Gratitude, and Joy !

“ Hic Jacet.”

LET not a bell be toll'd, or tear be shed
 When I am dead :—
 Let no night-dog, with dreary howl,
 Or ghastly shriek of boding owl
 Make harsh a change so calm, so hallowed :—
 Lay not my bed





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